



Commerce
Subcabinet
Guidance Collaboration Action

February 13, 2020
Department of Natural Resources
Conference Room C1, 580 Taylor Avenue, Annapolis
10:00am – 12:00pm

Attendees:

Cabinet Members:

Kelly Schulz, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Chair
Ken Holt, Secretary, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
Jimmy Rhee, Special Secretary, Governor's Office of Small Minority and Women Business Affairs (GOSBA)
Tiffany Robinson, Secretary, Department of Labor
Deputy Secretary Horacio Tablada for Ben Grumbles, Secretary, Department of Environment (MDE)
Deputy Secretary Earl Lewis for Greg Slater, Secretary, Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Robert McCord, Secretary, Department of Planning (MDP)
Jim Fielder, Secretary, Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)
Michael Higgs, Director of Assessments & Taxation (SDAT)
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Joe Bartenfelder, Secretary, Department of Agriculture (MDA)
Wendi Peters, Special Secretary, Smart Growth

Guests:

Ryan Snow, Governor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (GOIA)
Gretchen Hardman, GOIA
Allison Cordell, Governor's Office of Performance Improvement (GOPI)
Kory Boone, SDAT
Mike Pantelides, Labor
Ann Gunning, Labor
Victor Clark, Labor
Janice Walker-Emeogo, Labor
Isaiah Ellis, MHEC
Todd Scott, DHCD
Marcie Castaneda, DHCD
Frank Dickson, DHCD
Carrie Cook, DNR

Commerce Staff:

Julie Woepke
Kyle McColgan
Jayson Knott
Sarah Sheppard

I. Call to Order

Secretary Schulz called the meeting to order at 10:10 am.

II. Review and approval of December 13, 2019 Minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the December 13, 2019 meeting were approved.

III. Chair Update

Secretary Kelly Schulz indicated that a 2020 focus for the Department is entrepreneurship and innovation. She stated that for the first time, the Department accompanied Maryland businesses to Startup Grind in Silicon Valley, CA and is working hard to advance the State's innovation reputation. She stated the Department is finalizing a list of innovation investments by State Agency to promote the State's collective investment.

Secretary Schulz introduced Senior Director Jayson Knott, Business and Industry Development who highlighted several recent attraction and expansion projects resulting in over 800 new jobs. Mr. Knott reviewed several pending attraction, expansion and retention announcements, ongoing open opportunities and select new opportunities. He noted the interest in Baltimore City for several opportunities. (Presentation on file.)

IV. 2020 Legislative Priorities

Secretaries or Deputy Secretaries in attendance discussed pending 2020 legislation that impact businesses and Agency programs. Included in the discussion was renewable energy development; incentives for solar panels placed on brownfields; the Potomac Bridge; motor emissions exemptions for military; extension of the Public Private Partnership legislation sunset date; state-wide grant system amendments; small business reserve goals; funding for the implementation of the Kirwan Commission recommendations; transferable business licenses for military and spouses; tax credits; seafood industry markets; training program qualification amendments; sustainable materials management; expenditure of revitalization funds outside the Capital Beltway; opportunity zone program amendments; catfish markets; poultry waste; potential redistricting due to Census results; housing tax credits; and business cancellation fees. Secretary McCord reminded all in attendance of the importance of the Census.

Secretary Schulz reported that the Department is strongly advocating for the continuance of its tax credit programs to remain competitive and to support emerging industries. She then proposed in the form of a motion the addition of a Workgroup comprised of Commerce, DNR, MDE, AG, MDOT, among others to build a collaborative approach to assist businesses seeking assistance with the emerging Sustainable Materials Management industry. Secretaries Holt and Fielder suggested that Agencies work collectively on the topic. Motion was approved unanimously.

V. Opportunity Zone Update

Mr. Frank Dickson, Director, Strategic Business Initiatives, DHCD, presented an update on the Opportunity Zone Program. He addressed National and State Program updates, equity raised to date, qualified funds and discussed pending legislation that would impede investment into the zones. He stated the Opportunity Zone Information Exchange is very active receiving 37% of the traffic to the Department's website. Mr. Dickson then presented examples of several projects and a summary of zone incentives by the Departments of Commerce, Labor and DHCD. He concluded by summarizing areas to accelerate investment into zones. (Presentation on file.)

Mr. Dickson answered questions from the Subcabinet. The Subcabinet requested receiving monthly updates by Mr. Dickson to keep apprised of the program.

VI. Subcabinet Workgroups

a. Customer Service

Ms. Allison Cordell, the new Director, Governor's Office of Performance Improvement addressed the Subcabinet. She stated that Maryland maintains an 87% overall Customer Satisfaction Rating. Ms. Cordell then review Subcabinet Agency survey results.

Mr. Mike Pantelides, Executive Director, Office of Small Business Regulatory Assistance, Department of Labor provided an update on the Governor's Customer Service Initiative. He reported the Governor's Hero Award has been reinstated and a quarterly meeting of the Customer Service Liaisons has been scheduled for March 9th. He then illustrated a Google MyBusiness tool that allows users to write a review on the service received by an Agency. He stated that Labor utilizes this tool which requires a dedicated staff member to respond. He said he will review this next tool in customer service to the liaisons next month. (Presentation on file.)

b. Workforce Development

Ms. Sarah Sheppard, Director of Education and Workforce, Department of Commerce reported the Department has developed blog posts to direct people to the Workforce Expressway. She stated the Workgroup is working with the Small Business Workgroup Communications Subcommittee for suggestions to improve the user experience on the Workforce Expressway. She added that the Workgroup is working with Human Resources professionals to promote the website as a valuable resource.

Ms. Ann Marie Gunning, Manager, Office of Workforce, Department of Labor reported that the gain in jobs has been the strongest five-month stretch since 2010 and the unemployment rate is at 3.5%. She emphasized the gain in leisure and hospitality sector jobs. Ms. Gunning then provided updates to the Registered Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship Programs. Ms. Gunning concluded by addressing partnerships related to recent dislocation and layoff aversions. (Presentation on file.)

c. Small Business

Mr. Kory Boone, Special Assistant to the Secretary, SDAT, reported the Communications Subcommittee has evaluated the Maryland Business Express (MBEx), Maryland Workforce Expressway and Regional Resources webpages from the perspective of the user and has offered enhancements for the user experience. The amendments will be discussed at the Subcommittee's next meeting. Mr. Boone explained that collaborations are being made with the Department of Information Technology on the enterprise calendar in addition to the small business calendar, the Agency news section of the MBEx and the addition of Federal small business resources links. Mr. Boone then reviewed MBEx analytics and highlights, the replication of the website format on other State websites, and the volume of web traffic on the MBEx. (Presentation on file.)

d. Regional Resources

Ms. Julie Woepke, Executive Director, Maryland Economic Development Commission, Department of Commerce, addressed the Subcabinet on behalf of the Workgroup. She described updates to the reporting since the December meeting noting the coordination and follow up with the Team Leaders. She then introduced the Team Leaders.

Mr. Ryan Snow, GOIA, Eastern Shore Team Leader reported on the Region's top Action Plan - the William Preston, Jr. Memorial (Bay) Bridge reconstruction project. He stated that the mild weather has assisted in advancing the completion of the bridge repair and that the Team is identifying an additional project for collaboration. Projects being considered include Bainbridge Redevelopment, Cambridge Waterfront, Somerset Gas Line, or Downtown Salisbury. He added that top benefit from the formation of the Regional Team is communication among Agencies.

Mr. Isaiah Ellis of MHEC, Baltimore Metro Team Leader briefly updated the Subcabinet on new opportunities and emphasized one which had recently surfaced in collaboration with DC Metro Team Leader Todd Scott that was not on the Opportunities spreadsheet – Baltimore City Northeast Project:

The Park –A Socio-economic Development Model:

- A 500,000 square foot state of the art industrial park serving as the intersection of industry and workforce development.
- The Industrial Park will be home to:
 - Workforce Development programs including Construction, Manufacturing, Cyber Security, Culinary and Healthcare
 - Heavy Equipment simulators which provide a top industry credential in a safe and controlled learning environment
 - A biodegradable asphalt release agent blending facility
 - Commercial food manufacturing facility
 - 3-D Printer manufacturing workspace
 - Office space for on-site government agency support and resources
- Strategic partnership with Baltimore Chamber of Commerce, Mayor's Office of Economic Development and MHEC ensuring student residents with the greatest need receive the most effective quality programming possible that result in lasting, livable employment
- Pending DHCD programs - Project CORE, Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative, and Community Legacy applications
- Located in a Federal Opportunity Zone

Upon discussion with the Subcabinet, it was requested that a memo be prepared that outlines the project and direct assistance needed from the Subcabinet.

Ms. Gretchen Hardman, GOIA, Southern Maryland Team Leader referenced the updates to the Mallow Bay National Marine Sanctuary Action Plan. She then described a recent meeting of the Team at Kelly Generators and a visit to North Beach which has led to assistance and collaborations among the State Agencies. She concluded by stating that the Team has identified a need for an additional Fire Marshal due to the volume of applications and length of approval time, thus slowing business productivity. There is currently only one for the Region. Secretary Schulz suggested that the Region work with the Fire Marshal's office to evaluate the volume compared to similar regions, perhaps identifying shared resources or contracting inspectors as options. It was requested that Ms. Hardman report back to the Subcabinet with the findings.

Mr. Todd Scott, DC Metro Team Leaders, stated the Purple Line Action Plan remains under development. He reported that several Team members are now on the Purple Line Corridor Coalition in the areas of business and housing. He also reported that the Regional Resources Team collaboration has led to a significant assistance in a form of a loan to a business – Choice Stairways that will bring a large investment and employment to Prince George's County.

Ms. Julie Woepke reported for the Western Team. She stated that discussions are ongoing between Frostburg State University and Hagerstown Community College regarding the curriculum development and that Frostburg would likely be the applicant for an EARN Grant with the Department of Labor. She directed the Subcabinet to the Updates and Opportunities spreadsheets and noted the I-81 regional transportation project.

Ms. Woepke concluded the Regional Team Reporting stating that the monthly calls are ongoing, collaboration examples are being collected to promote, and an annual meeting of the Teams is being discussed.

VII. Good of the Order

Deputy Secretary Earl Lewis gave an update on the George Washington Bridge – Phase 1 that will have several sections. Secretary Schulz mentioned a ROOTS funding program for rural transportation opportunities that was discussed at a recent meeting of the National Governor’s Association.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 12:25 pm.